


ATTACHMENT 2



COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Matt Schneider, Deputy Director, Long Range Planning 
Staff Contact: Julie Harris, Senior Planner

DATE: October 20, 2015

RE: **Revisions (RV02) to the Draft Final Environmental Impact Report (14EIR-00000-00005) – Finding that State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5(b) applies to the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan: Planning and Development Case Numbers 14GPA-00000-00018, 14GPA-00000-00019, 11ORD-00000-00015, 13ORD-00000-00011, 11RZN-00000-00002, 15RZN-00000-00004**

The County of Santa Barbara prepared a Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan (EGVCP) and a Revision Letter RV01 to address minor changes to the project. This second EIR Revision Letter (RV02) provides minor revisions and clarifications to the Final EIR to address comments from the Environmental Defense Center and minor amendments to a Parks, Recreation, Trails program, policy, and action.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15088.5 describes the circumstances under which a lead agency is required to recirculate an EIR when new information is added to the EIR after public notice is given of the availability of the Draft EIR for public review, but before EIR certification. Significant new information that would require recirculation would include a new significant impact or an unmitigated substantial increase in the severity of an impact. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5, “information” can include changes in the project or environmental setting as well as additional data or other information. New information added to an EIR is not “significant” unless a new significant environmental impact would result from the project, a new mitigation measure is proposed to be implemented, a substantial increase in the severity of an environmental impact would result, or the EIR is changed in a way that deprives the public of a meaningful opportunity to comment upon a new substantial adverse environmental effect of the project or a feasible way to mitigate or avoid such an effect. CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5(b) states, “[r]ecirculation is not required where the new information added to the EIR merely clarifies or amplifies or makes insignificant modifications in an adequate EIR.”

The Board of Supervisors finds that the Final EIR (14EIR-00000-00005) and EIR Revision Letter RV01, as herein amended by the attached EIR Revision Letter (RV02), may be used to fulfill the environmental review requirements for the EGVCP (Board Letter Attachment 1 dated October 20, 2015). None of the changes recommended by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors would result in any new, changed, or unmitigated environmental impacts nor would they cause changes to the conclusions in the impacts analysis in the draft Final EIR. The changes would not deprive the public of a meaningful opportunity to comment because the information added clarifies and further explains the analysis already contained in the EIR. Hence, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5(b), the proposed revisions described in this EIR Revision Letter have not been recirculated. The Final EIR for the EGVCP is hereby amended by this second revision document, identified as (14EIR-00000-00005 RV02).

Enclosure: Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan FEIR 14EIR-00000-00005 Revision Letter
(RV 02)

Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan

Final Environmental Impact Report

14EIR-00000-00005

SCH #2012091048

Revision Letter (RV 02)

October 20, 2015

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**REVISIONS TO THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (RV02)
(14EIR-00000-00005, SCH#2012091048)**

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I. BACKGROUND

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15168, a program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (14EIR-00000-00005) (SCH#2012091048) was prepared for the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan (EGVCP). The Draft EIR for the EGVCP was released for public comment on August 12, 2014. A publically noticed Draft EIR comment hearing was held on September 10, 2014. Public and agency comments were received until the end of the comment period on October 3, 2014. The County responded in writing to comments received on the Draft EIR in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088. Responses to the comments describe the disposition of significant environmental issues raised and changes to the EIR made in response to the comments, including text changes. The draft Final EIR evaluated seven project alternatives in addition to the proposed project, as follows: No Project Alternative; Reduced Growth Alternative; Alternative A - Housing Site A (Giorgi South Hollister) with Reduced Growth; Alternative B - Housing Site B (Hodges/San Marcos Growers Parcel 1) with Reduced Growth; Alternative C - Housing Site A (Giorgi South Hollister) with Site 2 (Tatum/Santa Barbara High School); Alternative D - Housing Site B (Hodges/San Marcos Growers Parcel 1) with MTD; and Alternative E - Plan Update without Housing Site 6 (South Patterson Triangle).

The draft Final EIR concluded that the EGVCP would result in significant unmitigable (Class I) impacts to: Transportation and Circulation, Aesthetic/Visual Resources, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Public Services and Facilities – Water Supplies, and Parks, Recreation, and Trails. The EGVCP would also result in significant but mitigable (Class II) impacts to Land Use and Planning, Aesthetic/Visual Resources, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Biological Resources, Flooding and Water Resources, Cultural Resources, Public Facilities – Wildland Fire, Noise, Geologic Hazards and Soils, and Hazardous Materials/Risk of Upset.

The Planning Commission considered the EGVCP during public hearings on June 17, 2015 and July 22, 2015. On July 22, 2015, the Planning Commission voted 4-1 to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the EGVCP as modified by Alternative E, the environmentally superior alternative, and certify the Final EIR as adequate environmental review under CEQA, with minor revisions to be detailed in EIR Revision Letter RV01. The Board of Supervisors considered the EGVCP, the Final EIR, and EIR Revision Letters RV01 and RV02 at a public hearing on October 20, 2015.

II. REVISIONS TO THE EIR ANALYSIS

This EIR Revision Letter makes minor corrections and revisions to the Final EIR to address the Environmental Defense Center (EDC) letter dated October 9, 2015 regarding the analysis of the More Mesa property in the Final EIR, and to provide minor amendments to Program PRT-EGV-3A relating to Goleta Beach County Park, and to Policy PRT-EGV-7.6 and to add Action PRT-EGV-7C relating to the San Marcos Foothills Preserve.

The EDC letter expresses concern that the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan EIR classified potential impacts to biological and aesthetic/visual resources that could result from development of the More Mesa property as Class II (significant but mitigable) while the 1992 Goleta Community Plan EIR classified those impacts as Class I (significant and unavoidable). Further, the EDC letter states that P&D staff indicated that this reclassification of impacts was an error.

Based upon staff's review of the issues raised by the EDC, staff found the following two errors: (1) the executive summary impact table (Table S-1) in the EIR incorrectly summarized the land use compatibility impacts to include reference to "biological resources and aesthetic character" (see row 6, page S-13 of Table S-1) and (2) the executive summary impact table incorrectly summarized the aesthetics/visual resources impacts to include reference to "biological" impacts (see row 1, page S-19 of Table S-1).

This EIR Revision Letter (RV 02) corrects the executive summary impact table to address these two errors. It deletes the reference to "biological resources and aesthetic character" in the land use compatibility impact summary and deletes the reference to "biological" impacts in the aesthetics/visual resources impact summary, consistent with the analysis of the issues in the main body of the EIR. As shown and discussed in further detail in this EIR Revision Letter (RV02), the land use compatibility and aesthetics/visual resources sections of the executive summary impact table should be revised because the analyses of the impacts in those EIR sections themselves did not discuss such impacts; therefore, the summary of the substance of the EIR is incorrect. The land use and aesthetics/visual resources EIR sections and the executive summary impact table correctly identified land use compatibility and aesthetics/visual resources impacts as Class II and staff does not recommend any changes to those conclusions.

Biological impacts for development of More Mesa are considered as part of the build out of the plan and are indentified as Class I (significant and unavoidable). The references to two mistakes in the executive summary impact table related to land use compatibility impacts and aesthetics/visual resources impacts discussed above were the errors that P&D staff admitted to that the EDC referenced in its letter. As noted above, staff recommends changes to correct those errors. Staff does not recommend any changes to the impact levels identified for biological resources in pages S-24 through S-28 of the executive summary impact table, which includes a number of Class I impacts. However, this EIR Revision Letter (RV02) does clarify that the biological impact analysis of the Urban Area includes land within the Coastal Zone.

Classification of aesthetic/visual impacts of development of the More Mesa property as Class II was not an error. The 1992 Goleta Community Plan classified aesthetics/open space impacts of development of More Mesa as Class I; however, as discussed below, a different buildout is now analyzed and different policies are applicable.

The 1992 Goleta Community Plan EIR classified aesthetics/open space impacts of development of More Mesa as Class I. (GCP EIR, page V.F-13, Table V.F-3; page V.F-15.) That conclusion was based on buildout of 106 units, scattered over the More Mesa property. (GCP EIR, page III-

15, Table III-1) To reduce the impact, but not below a level of insignificance, the 1992 EIR recommended the following mitigation measure (F-18) that required:

New development on More Mesa shall be clustered to minimize disruption of views from areas of high public use. New development shall utilize low profile construction, earthtone colors and landscape screening to further minimize visual disruption of More Mesa. (GCP EIR, page V.F-19.)

This mitigation measure became DevStd LUDS-GV-1.7 and DevStd LUDS-GV-1.10 that were ultimately made applicable to the More Mesa property under the Goleta Community Plan and are proposed to continue to be applicable under the EGVCP. The 1992 EIR also considered reductions in allowable buildout at the More Mesa property: (1) Alternative A analyzed 50 units, and (2) Alternatives B and C analyzed 30 units. (GCP EIR, page VIII-11.) Analysis of these reduced-development alternatives concluded that they reduced impacts to aesthetics/open space, but that the impact remained Class I. However, the Class I impact identified in the Alternatives was for a cumulative, Plan-wide buildout, not for the impact of the reduced-development options at More Mesa specifically. (GCP EIR, pages VIII-28-29, VIII-36, and VIII-53.) Until the current analysis in the EGVCP FEIR, buildout of 70 units, clustered in the northeast area of the site has not been analyzed.

The buildout analyzed by the EGVCP Final EIR consists of 70 units, clustered in the northeast area of the property, which is an entirely different project than that analyzed in the 1992 EIR. The EGVCP Final EIR concludes that development of More Mesa results in a Class II impact in aesthetics/visual resources based on the reduced amount of development and the numerous additional policies proposed by the EGVCP that limit and guide future development. The new EGVCP policies are applicable Plan-wide, but would apply to development in More Mesa. This EIR Revision Letter (RV02) clarifies the applicability of these policies and development standards. These new policies were not included or studied in the 1992 EIR. Staff continues to conclude that substantial evidence supports that the EGVCP results in a Class II impact to aesthetics/visual resources in More Mesa.

These changes result in minor corrections and clarifications to the text and analysis in the draft Final EIR, which are detailed in this EIR Revision Letter (RV02). This Revision Letter presents the revised language in italics with strikethrough (deleted text) and underline (new text) text. The minor revisions documented in this second EIR Revision Letter do not require recirculation of the EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5(b), as they do not involve substantial increases in impacts or substantially new mitigation strategies, and do not deprive the public of a meaningful opportunity to comment.

A. Clarifications to Program EIR Review Process and Approach (Section 1.5)

The following paragraph is added to Section 1.5 (page 1-11) to clarify the approach and use of this program EIR for environmental review for subsequent development proposals at More Mesa.

This EIR is a program EIR that analyzes the potential environmental impacts of the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan (EGVCP). Its analysis of More Mesa does not consider a specific project or include a project-level comprehensive analysis of all potential environmental effects on aesthetic, biological, or other sensitive environmental resources from full buildout at More Mesa based on the policies proposed in the EGVCP. As a result, future projects on More Mesa would require additional environmental review, which would likely consist of an EIR. The level of environmental impacts of future development proposals at More Mesa would be based on a detailed analysis of the specific project and environmental setting at the time of the subsequent analysis and would not be limited to those impacts identified in the program EIR. Future development at More Mesa could not rely solely on the Final EIR for the EGVCP.

B. Clarifications to Visual Resources Analysis (Section 4.3)

Visual Resources Section 4.3.3.2, Impact VIS-1 Visual Character Changes

Section 4.3.3.2 (page 4.3-23) is revised to clarify the analysis of impacts to visual character in the Coastal Zone as it relates to proposed development buildout at More Mesa.

Coastal Area

More Mesa is currently a vacant 300-acre site located within the Coastal Zone. The Plan update would allow potential development of up to 70 units at More Mesa (land use and zoning designations of PD-70 and PRD-70, respectively). Buildout of the site has the potential to result in incompatibility with existing surrounding uses, structures, or intensity of development, affecting the visual character.

Policy LUDS-EGV-1.1 requires designation of the County parcel as “Open Lands” and the More Mesa property as Planned Development-70. Consistent with proposed site-specific Development Standard LUDS-EGV-1A, the Plan update proposes to cluster the potential 70 units on 40 acres in the northeast portion of the site, adjoining existing residential development and resulting in an effective density of approximately 1.8 units per developable acre. This density of development would be compatible with the adjacent existing residential land uses, which are developed with a range of densities from 1.8 units per acre north of More Mesa to 1 unit per acre and 1 unit per 2 acres east of the property. Development Standard LUDS-EGV-1A requires development of a Specific Plan for the property. The Plan update proposes several additional development standards, cited in Section 4.1, Land Use, that are specific to development at More Mesa: LUDS-EGV-1G, LUDS-EGV-1J, and LUDS-EGV-1L. Together, the policy and the development standards call for the long-term protection of the site’s aesthetic character by: (1) designating a large area of the More Mesa property as open lands and thus avoiding development of the entire property and reducing potential visual character changes; (2) requiring a specific plan to ensure cohesive and controlled development of More Mesa; (3) clustering development in the northeast portion of the property near existing development and thus minimizing disruption of significant views from areas of high public use; (4) requiring the use of materials and colors that would ensure future

development is compatible with the surrounding open lands terrain as well as existing adjacent development; and (5) siting development to preserve compatibility with adjacent development in order to minimize visual character changes to the area.

In addition, the Plan update includes new land use and visual resource protection policies and development standards that would apply to new development throughout the Plan area, including More Mesa: EGV-4.1, EGV-4A, EGV-4B, LUR-EGV-2.2, LUR-EGV-3.1, VIS-EGV-1.1, VIS-EGV-1.2, VIS-EGV-1.4, VIS-EGV-1.5, VIS-EGV-1.6, and VIS-EGV-1A. Together, these policies and development standards require new land use and development to complement existing neighborhoods, aesthetics, and viewsheds; design, site, and configure development to promote natural light and maximize compatibility with surrounding uses; consider the development's effects on the character of existing neighborhoods; require compatibility of design, scale, and character with the surrounding built environment; and preserve and protect public vistas and visual resources. Finally, the Coastal Land Use Plan Policy 4.1 requires design review and approval by the Board of Architectural Review for development designated PD and Policy 4.4 requires that new structures conform to the scale and character of the existing community.

Implementation of these proposed new policies and development standards, along with the More Mesa development standards and Coastal Land Use Plan Policies 4.2 and 4.4, would ensure that development of More Mesa would be compatible with existing surrounding land uses and not result in a significant negative change to visual character. Impacts would be significant but mitigable (Class II impact).

Visual Resources Section 4.3.3.2, Impact VIS-2 Public Scenic Views, Routes and Gateways

Section 4.3.3.2 (page 4.3-30) is revised to clarify the analysis of impacts to public scenic views in the Coastal Zone as it relates to proposed development buildout at More Mesa.

Coastal Area

More Mesa is a 300-acre vacant site located within the Coastal Zone. One key public "360 degree" viewpoint is identified within More Mesa. The site also contains numerous trails, which receive extensive passive recreational use from hikers, cyclists, equestrians, and beach users. The property provides opportunities for scenic views to the mountains to the north and the ocean to the south, with views of existing adjacent residential development to the north, east, and west. The Plan update would allow potential development of the site with up to 70 units (land use and zoning designations of PD-70 and PRD-70, respectively). Buildout of the property has the potential to result in impacts to the public scenic views from this property.

Consistent with proposed site specific Development Standard LUDS-EGV-1A, and site constraints that limit the development potential of the site to areas primarily located outside of designated environmentally sensitive habitat areas, the Plan update proposes to cluster the potential 70 units on 40 acres in the northeast portion of the property. In

addition, Development Standard LUDS-EGV-1G requires development to be clustered to minimize disruption of significant views and avoid environmentally sensitive habitat. Therefore, with development located in the northeast margin of More Mesa much of the site would be retained as natural open space, including a 36-acre area owned by the County. Scenic views would be maintained from the majority of the site and from public trails that traverse the area.

In addition, the Plan update includes new visual resource protection policies and development standards that would apply to new development throughout the Plan area, including More Mesa (VIS-EGV-1.1, VIS-EGV-1.2, VIS-EGV-1.4, VIS-EGV-1.5, VIS-EGV-1.6, and VIS-EGV-1A). Together, these new policies and development standards require development, in general, to minimize impacts to open space views as seen from public vistas. More specifically, they require priority public vistas, which include More Mesa, to be preserved and enhanced. Finally, to achieve these goals, these new policies and development standards require high quality design and landscaping; require development be compatible in design and scale with the surrounding built environment and not impair public visual resources; and enhance, frame, and promote public vistas by following several design criteria.

The clustering of development at More Mesa adjacent to existing residential development, the implementation of the More Mesa development standards, and the implementation of the EGVCP's new visual resource protection policies and development standards together would reduce impacts to public scenic views to less than significant levels. Impacts would be significant but mitigable (Class II impact).

C. Clarifications to Biological Resources Analysis (Section 4.6)

Biological Resources Section 4.6.3.2, Impact BIO-1 Sensitive Vegetation Communities

On page 4.6-43, fourth paragraph, the text is revised to add the following clarifying language:

Further protection is afforded to riparian and wetland vegetation communities through Plan update policies such as Policy ECO-EGV-5.5, which in the Urban Area, which includes land within the Coastal Zone, and EDRNs, requires...

Biological Resources Section 4.6.3.2, Impact BIO-2 Sensitive Plant Species

On page 4.6-58, fourth paragraph, the text is revised to add the following clarifying language:

...For projects within the Urban Area, which includes land within the Coastal Zone, EDRNs, and Mountainous Areas, the Plan update policies and development standards prioritized avoidance, minimization...

Biological Resources Section 4.6.3.2, Impact BIO-3 Sensitive Wildlife Species

On page 4.6-62, last paragraph, the text is revised to add the following clarifying language:

...For projects within the Urban Area, which includes land within the Coastal Zone, EDRNs, and Mountainous Areas, the Plan update policies and development standards prioritized avoidance, minimization...

Biological Resources Section 4.6.3.2, Impact BIO-4 Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waters

On page 4.6-70 last paragraph, the text is revised to add the following clarifying language:

...For projects within the Urban Area, which includes land within the Coastal Zone, EDRNs, and Mountainous Areas, the Plan update policies and development standards prioritized avoidance, minimization...

Biological Resources Section 4.6.3.2, Impact BIO-5 Wildlife Movement Corridors

On page 4.6-75 last paragraph, the text is revised to add the following clarifying language:

...For projects within the Urban Area, which includes land within the Coastal Zone, EDRNs, and Mountainous Areas, the Plan update policies and development standards prioritized avoidance, minimization...

D. Analysis of Revisions to Policies, Development Standards, Actions, and Programs

The County clarified the following PRT program and policy and added a new action item to accurately reflect and reference a recent coastal permit and exiting management plan.

Program PRT-EGV-3A: *Continue to ameliorate ongoing beach erosion at Goleta Beach County Park in compliance with the County's Coastal Development Permit No. 4-14-0687 approved by the California Coastal Commission on May 13, 2015. ~~with consideration of alternative park configurations and their potential recreational, environmental, and fiscal impacts.~~*

Policy PRT-EGV-7.6: *The County shall continue to manage and maintain the San Marcos Foothills Preserve (Preserve property, 200 acres, APNs 055-010-014, 055-010-027, and 059-020-060 and Park property, 10 acres, APNs 059-020-053, 059-020-055, and 059-020-057). The Preserve property shall be managed as public open space to protect and conserve environmental resources while allowing for limited public access, consistent with the San Marcos Foothills Preserve Long-Term Open Space Management Plan (Watershed Environmental, Inc., April 28, 2014). ~~any terms and/or easements for conservation of the property(ies).~~The Park property shall be managed in the same manner as the Preserve property until such a time that the Park parcels are developed as a passive park. The Park shall then be managed consistent with other passive park properties in the County Parks system.*

Action PRT-EGV-7C: *As funding becomes available, the County shall prepare a Park Master Plan and develop a passive park on the 10-acre Park property to include uses*

such as trails, informational kiosks, picnic areas, public restrooms, off-leash dog area, and other passive uses.

Residual Impacts

The EIR identified less than significant impacts to parks, recreation, and trails (PRT) from increased demand for recreational facilities in part due to the inclusion and implementation of the policies, actions, and programs of the EGVCP (Impact PR-1). These revisions clarify current permits and plans for park and preserve management and passive park planning. Therefore, no change to the Final EIR analysis is warranted, and impacts to PRT would remain less than significant (Class III).

E. EIR Errata

Executive Summary Table S-1 Page S-13

Under the summary of impacts to land use compatibility (Impact LU-1), the Final EIR incorrectly states “[d]evelopment of More Mesa could result in impacts to the site’s biological resources and aesthetic character” (row 6, column 2) when in fact the Final EIR references that the clustering and limits on development provide for “long-term protection of the site’s biological and aesthetic character” and that regarding land use compatibility, impacts would be significant but mitigable. (FEIR, page 4.1-17, 18.) It also identifies land use policies as mitigation that would reduce impacts to biological and aesthetic resources to less than significant (row 6 column 3) when in fact the Final EIR section referenced by the Executive Summary analyzes only impacts to land use compatibility. These statements in the Executive Summary for land use compatibility regarding biological resources and aesthetic character do not accurately reflect the analysis of impacts of development on More Mesa to land use compatibility as presented on pages 4.1-17 and 4.1-18 of the Final EIR. Therefore, Table S-1 is corrected under LU-1 Land Use Compatibility to provide the following impact and mitigation measures summary statements, respectively, consistent with the existing analysis on pages 4.1-17 and 4.1-18 of the Final EIR.

Development of More Mesa could result in impacts relative to land use incompatibility with existing surrounding land uses. ~~*to the site’s biological resources and aesthetic character.*~~ [Row 6, Column 2]

The Plan update contains development standards specific to buildout of More Mesa: DevStd LUDS-EGV-1A, DevStd LUDS-EGV-1G, DevStd LUDS-EGV-1J, and DevStd LUDS-EGV-1L, which would serve to reduce impacts relative to land use incompatibility. ~~*related to biological resources and aesthetic character.*~~ [Row 6 Column 3]

Executive Summary Table S-1 Page S-19

Under the summary of impacts to visual character changes (VIS-1), the Final EIR incorrectly states “[d]evelopment of More Mesa has potential to result in significant but mitigable impacts to biological and aesthetic character’ (row 1, column 2). This statement is incorrect because the analysis of impacts to visual resources in Chapter 4.0, Section 4.3 (Aesthetics/Visual Resources) of the Final EIR does not consider or analyze impacts to biological resources. Therefore, this

impact summary statement is corrected to read as follows, consistent with the existing analysis in Section 4.3 of the Final EIR:

The development of More Mesa has potential to result in significant but mitigable biological and aesthetic character impacts. [Row 1, Column 2]

III. CONCLUSION

Minor corrections and clarifications to the text and analysis in the draft Final EIR were required to respond to the EDC letter and to address the minor changes to a PRT program, policy, and new action. None of the changes recommended would result in any new, changed, or unmitigated environmental impacts nor would they cause changes to the conclusions in the impacts analysis in the draft Final EIR, or deprive the public of a meaningful opportunity to comment.